

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AGRE-00 DODE-00 AID-05 CIAE-00
COME-00 EB-08 FRB-03 INR-10 NSAE-00 ICA-11
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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7810

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ECON, EGEN
SUBJ: EXTENSIVE MEDIA COVERAGE OF GOE ACTIONS TO CONTROL
- SPIRALLING PRICES

REF: (A) CAIRO 09509, (B) CAIRO 09907

1. APRIL 10 LOCAL PRESS DEVOTES EXTENSIVE COVERAGE TO GOE EFFORTS TO CURTAIL SPIRALLING PRICES AND SHORTAGES OF FOOD COMMODITIES. ACCORDING TO PRESS, P. A. DEBATE WILL CONTINUE THAT DAY ON GOVERNMENT POLICY TO CONTROL SPIRALLING PRICE OF MEAT. MINISTERS SUPPLY, AGRICULTURE, AND INDUSTRY WILL REPORTEDLY TAKE PART IN DEBATE. IN ADDITION, PA WILL ALSO SET DATES FOR DISCUSSION OF HOUSING AND DRINKING WATER PROBLEMS.

2. FOCUS OF PRESS COVERAGE IS ON MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE FOR SUPPLY POLICY FOLLOW-UP, WHICH IS SCHEDULED TO HOLD ITS FIRST SESSION APRIL 10. COMMITTEE MEETING WILL REPORTEDLY INCLUDE MINISTERS SUPPLY, AGRICULTURE, INDUSTRY, INTERIOR AND GOVERNORS OF CAIRO, ALEXANDRIA, GIZA, AND KALLUBIYA GOVERNORATES. COMMITTEE WILL, ACCORDING TO PRESS, ATTEMPT TO ARRIVE AT INTERIM SOLUTIONS.

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TIONS FOR SHORTAGES OF MEAT AND VEGETABLES. AMONG PROPOSALS TO BE CONSIDERED BY COMMITTEE ARE ESTABLISHMENT OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLE "POOLS" IN GOVERNORATES, EXTENSION HOURS OF LOCAL FOOD COOPERATIVES, EXPANSION NUMBER OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLE KIOSKS, AND INCREASING AMOUNT OF FRUITS, VEGETABLES, MEAT AND BREAD AVAILABLE FOR SALE.

3. TRADE AND SUPPLY MIN TEWFIK, MEANWHILE, REPORTED BY PRESS AS HAVING ANNOUNCED MOST KINDS OF VEGETABLES ALREADY AVAILABLE ON MARKET. DIRECTIVES OF PM SALEM, ACCORDING TO TEWFIK, HAVE ALREADY BEEN IMPLEMENTED AND AVAILABILITY FRUITS AND VEGETABLES IN MARKETS "CONFIRMED" BY SUPPLY INVESTIGATIONS AUTHORITIES. IMPROVEMENT IN SUPPLY SITUATION REPORTEDLY CAME ABOUT AFTER GOVERNORS TOOK PERSONAL CHARGE OF SETTING UP COMMODITY TRANSPORT FROM PRODUCING GOVERNORATES TO CAIRO.

4. COMMENT: AT BEST IT APPEARS GOE MAY BE ACTIVELY TRYING- TO AMELIORATE FOOD SUPPLY SHORTAGES. (THE MORE CYNICAL MIGHT TERM FLURRY OF REPORTS ON FOOD AVAILABILITIES AS LITTLE MORE THAN ORGANIZED PRESS CAMPAIGN TO DEMONSTRATE GOE'S ATTENTIVENESS TO PROBLEM" APRIL 10 PRESS NOTABLY SILENT, HOWEVER, ON GOE EFFORTS TO CONTROL PRICES. FURTHER FIREWORKS CAN BE EXPECTED AT PA DEBATES, THEREFORE, AS MEMBERS ATTEMPT TO INFLUENCE GOE TO ACT ON PRICE AS WELL AS SUPPLY PROBLEMS. SEPTEL FOLLOWS ON RESULTS OF PA SESSION. EILTS

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